



## Newsletter June 2025

*"Moving Forward"*

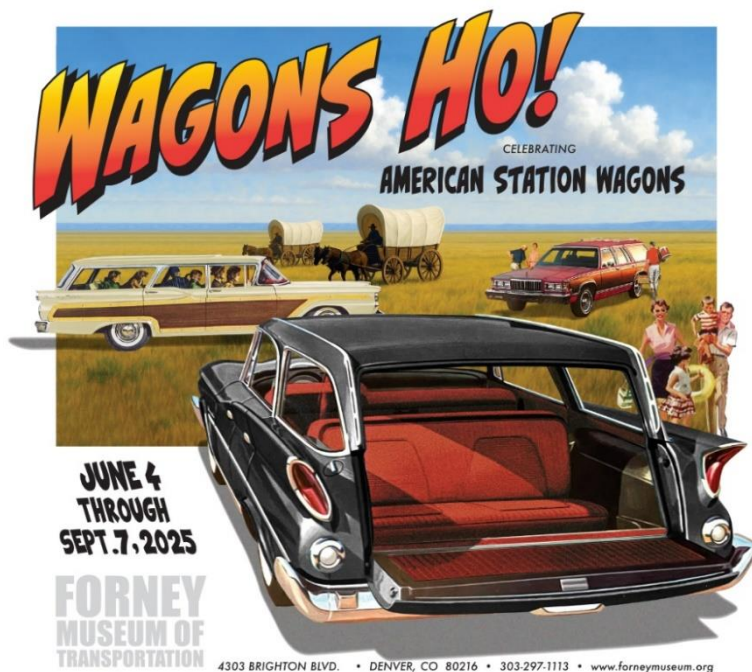
### Wagons, Ho!

Running now through September 7<sup>th</sup>, the Forney Museum is proud to present our "Wagons Ho!" exhibit. With so many classic station wagons on display, you don't want to miss it!

From their earliest beginnings as open wood-bodied vehicles for shuttling people and their luggage to and from train depots, station wagons were initially known as depot hacks. The humble station wagon has always been known as a dependable working vehicle. The advent of steel-bodied wagons and of course the post-war baby boom — with the need for vehicles to carry all those children — helped establish the station wagon as one of the most versatile and popular body styles by mid-century.

While minivans largely replaced station wagons beginning in the 1980s and SUVs have become more popular in recent years, and station wagons are most often thought of as boring, they helped build the prosperity and the American way of life in the post-war period and played a vital part in continuing the American love affair with the automobile — and the family road trip!

Come to the Forney Museum between now and September 7<sup>th</sup> and experience the history of this amazing automobile in our new exhibit, "Wagons Ho!"



## Saying Goodbye to Chevy

Now with our new exhibit in place it is time once again to say goodbye to all of the amazing vehicles from our previous one! The Pre-War Chevrolets exhibit proved popular with those who wanted to explore the beginnings of this iconic American automobile manufacturer. With 20 classic Chevys on display, spanning 1914 to 1942, there was something for every enthusiast of the brand to see.



While it is always a little sad to see one exhibit go, we are excited to present "Wagons Ho!" through September 7<sup>th</sup>. So make plans to come visit the Forney Museum today, before it is time to say goodbye again!

## Our Newest Arrival

On display now is this 1925 Packard Holbrook-Bodied Series 243 Limousine. Packard was one of the premier American luxury automobile manufacturers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Powered by a 358 cubic inch inline eight-cylinder engine, providing about 90 horsepower, and featuring a luxuriously appointed interior, this Packard



has an aluminum body built by Holbrook—a company that supplied coachwork for other luxury manufacturers such as Cadillac, Pierce-Arrow and Rolls-Royce! This is the only known surviving Packard Holbrook limousine from 1925 and is largely original. This classy limo is currently on display thanks to the generosity of Les Stern and Mark Felsen of Centennial, Colorado.



## This Month in Transportation History

**June 8, 1809** - The steamboat Phoenix departed New York for Philadelphia, and became the first steamboat to sail the open ocean. Originally planned to operate between New York City and New Brunswick, New Jersey, severe restrictions on steamboats in New York Harbor convinced the owners

of the Phoenix to operate her in the Delaware River around Philadelphia. After the successful voyage, the Phoenix would make her first run on the Delaware from Philadelphia to Trenton, New Jersey early the next month.

**June 22, 1909** - The firm of Wyckoff, Church & Partridge, automobile dealers based in New York City, became the first corporate entity in the United States to sell airplanes. Already established as automotive dealers, WCP was looking to branch into a new market when it contracted with Herring-Curtiss Company – forerunners of today's Curtiss-Wright Corporation – to sell their airplanes to the public. With ads exhorting the public to "Drive an Aeroplane" the first order for one of those planes came in less than 24 hours later on June 23.

**June 23, 1916** - The Modine Manufacturing Company was incorporated in Wisconsin by engineer Arthur Modine. From humble beginnings in a small one-room workshop, Modine would pioneer many thermal management solutions for automobiles, trucks and tractors. In the 1920s Modine would contract to supply radiators for Ford, and the Turbotube radiator would be adopted as standard equipment for the Model T, cementing Modine's legacy in automotive parts supply history.

**June 27, 1923** - The first-ever transfer of fuel from one aircraft to another during flight took place between two Airco DH-4B planes of the U.S. Army Air Service in the skies above San Diego. The plane, piloted by Captain Lowell H. Smith, received approximately 75 gallons of gasoline via a steel-wire-encased rubber hose from the plane flown overhead, as both aircraft flew at about 80 miles per hour in what one newspaper account headlined as "Tense Moments for Watchers."

**June 17, 1928** - Aviation history was made as a Fokker F.VIIb/3m aircraft named "Friendship", piloted by Wilmer Stutz and co-piloted by Lou Gordon, took off from Newfoundland, Canada, landing at Burry Point in Wales 20 hours and 40 minutes later. American aviator Amelia Earhart was aboard the flight as a passenger and keeper of the flight log, becoming the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. Earhart would go on to make history on her own 4 years later when she completed a similar journey – flying from Newfoundland to Londonderry, Ireland in 13 hours – becoming the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic.

**June 21, 1954** - NBC Radio presented the final broadcast of *The Railroad Hour*. This program, sponsored by the American Association of Railroads, had been on the air for 16 years in a music-and-drama format featuring the works of songwriting legends such as Irving Berlin, Noel Coward, and Cole Porter. While the program's episodes did not necessarily focus on railroads, the audience was never allowed to forget which mode of transportation served as the sponsor as each episode opened with a locomotive whistle; a rendition of the popular folk song *I've Been Working on the Railroad*; an invitation to board "our summer show train!" and the reminder that the program was "brought to you by the American railroads. The same railroads that bring you most of the clothes you wear, the food you eat, the fuel you burn and all the other things you use in your daily life."

## Bike Giveaway

On Saturday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, the Forney Museum held our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Bike Giveaway in the park next to Swansea Elementary School. This park is a beautiful venue for our event, where over 100 bicycles were given away – for FREE! – to our Globeville-Elyria-



Swansea neighbors who were in need. The Bike Giveaway is a fantastic opportunity for us to give back to the community, and we look forward to continuing the tradition again next year. There is little more gratifying than the look on a child's face when they receive their very own bicycle!

In order to keep this event rolling, we are looking for donations of gently used bicycles. If you would like to donate a bike for next year's giveaway, please email our Education Coordinator, Jennifer, at [education@forneymuseum.org](mailto:education@forneymuseum.org) to arrange a time for drop-off.

## Forney Speaker Series

On Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, the Museum hosted the prolific author, Chris Enss, to share stories of the women of the American West. A New York Times Bestselling author with over 50 books published exploring the subject, Chris tells stories that help uncover the resilience, grit, determination and successes of American history's trailblazing women.

Free with admission, these presentations offer a fantastic opportunity to learn about the lesser known sides of history. So come join us for our ongoing monthly series:



July 27<sup>th</sup> will be the presentation "Women in Aviation," all about the pioneering women who shaped the history of flight. From the early trailblazers to the modern day, this presentation will explore their challenges, triumphs and lasting impact on the skies.

August 31<sup>st</sup> we will have a full walkthrough and Q&A on the Museum's Big Boy, U.P. 4005, led by Carl Enger, the museum's Collections Manager and steam locomotive mechanic. Don't miss this deep dive into the operations of one of the world's most powerful steam engines.

September 28<sup>th</sup> we will be hosting David Fisher, the Executive Director of the Transportation Institute, as he gives his presentation "Transportation Dynamics." This will be a look at the forces that shape how we move, a fascinating exploration of motion, mechanics and innovation.

We look forward to seeing you then!

# Forney Vehicle Spotlight

## 1940 Graham Supercharged Custom Model 107

The American automobile manufacturer Graham-Paige was the product of three brothers from Indiana: Joseph, Robert and Ray Graham.

Initially the brothers built conversion kits for, and made modifications to, Ford Model T and Model TT trucks to be sold under the Graham Brothers brand. The brothers soon settled on using Dodge engines in their modified trucks, beginning a partnership between Dodge and Graham Brothers that would become official in 1925 when Dodge purchased the Graham Brothers Company, and took the brothers on in executive positions at Dodge.



Dodge would continue producing Graham Brothers trucks until 1928, after their acquisition by the Chrysler Corporation, but before that acquisition was complete the brothers themselves left the company to focus on production of their own automobiles. To this end, the brothers purchased the Paige-Detroit Motor Car Company, the makers of Paige and Jewett automobiles, for \$3.5 million –

which would be equivalent to almost \$64 million today! While a Paige model was produced for 1928, the brothers were focused on their new Graham-Paige designs.

The initial offerings were a line of cars and trucks with 6- and 8-cylinder engines. It wasn't long before Chrysler reminded the Graham brothers of the non-compete agreement they had signed in the sale of Graham Brothers, and so Graham-Paige stopped producing trucks to focus on 2- and 4-door cars. These first years went well for the fledgling company, and Graham-Paige earned a reputation for quality and performance. Graham also saw some success in racing, which helped drive sales of the new cars.



In 1929 new models were introduced, and Graham-Paige acquired Wayne Body Company of Wayne, Michigan so they could produce as many of the bodies and engines for their cars as possible on their own



assembly lines. Paige had struggled to reliably produce bodies on time, and the Grahams had finally solved this problem for the company. They did still contract with Continental for foundry work on their engines, leading some later models to be described as having Continental engines, but much of the Graham-Paige automobile was being produced in Graham factories by the 1930s.

While seeming set up for future success, the onset of the Great Depression sent the entire automobile industry – along with most other industries – into turmoil. With sales declining, the brothers tried for a bold redesign and 1932 saw the introduction of the Graham “Blue Streak” Eight. Designed by Amos Northrup, the Blue Streak was the model that defined the Graham brand. Despite



being well received by the public, sales continued to struggle and it was decided to introduce a Supercharged Blue Streak in 1934.

The Graham’s supercharger was designed by the company Assistant Chief Engineer, Floyd Kishline, and noticeably resembled the supercharger designed by Duesenberg. Supercharging raised the eight-cylinder to 135 horsepower, allowing the Blue Streak to surpass 90 miles per hour! The gambit worked and sales

increased for 1934 and 1935, but in 1936 Graham made the decision to focus exclusively on six-cylinder engines. These sixes were offered in three series for 1936: Crusader, Cavalier and Supercharger. Through the years Graham would produce more supercharged cars than any other automobile manufacturer until Buick overtook them in the 1990s.

After a few years of the Blue Streak, Graham decided to attempt a redesign of their car, but this new design was ill-received and sales began to drop again. This is when fortunes for the company irrevocably turned, but having limited funds to quickly try another redesign, Graham contracted with REO Motor Car Company to produce different bodies for their car with the Graham engine under the hood. Clearly this was only meant to be a temporary solution, and so Graham again approached



Amos Northrup to design a brand new car that would capture the public's imagination the way the Blue Streak had.

Unfortunately, Northrup passed away in 1937 before he could complete the new design. It is believed Graham engineers finished the design, but it is hard to say how closely the final product matched Northrup's ideas, and in 1938 Graham introduced their new car under the tagline "Spirit of Motion." This Art Deco-influenced styling was widely praised in the press, and won prestigious accolades such as the Concours d'Elegance in Paris, France. With the public, however, this brave modern design became known as "the Sharknose" and sales cratered. Considered too radical, too ugly or both, total production for Sharknose Grahams is 9,655 over three years.



Despite its unpopularity at the time, the "Spirit of Motion" Graham is considered to be one of the most unique and significant designs from the period. As one of only about a dozen examples known to survive today, this supercharged 1940 Graham showcases the understated elegance in the Graham design philosophy. Features include whitewall tires, rear fender skirts for a more streamlined look, electric clock and instruments set in a polished simulated wood dash, plush cloth seats and a heater/defroster. While not a luxury brand, the 120-inch-wheelbase, elegant appointments and 3,250 pound curb weight gave the Graham an imposing presence. This classic car would have cost \$1,295 in 1940, equivalent to over \$29,000 in 2025.

The engine is a 218 cubic inch L-head straight 6-cylinder, producing 120 horsepower with the belt-driven, intake-manifold-mounted centrifugal supercharger. This powerplant allowed the 1940 Graham to accelerate zero to sixty in under eleven seconds – a very respectable number for the time – with a top speed of about 95 miles per hour. A column-shifted 3-speed manual transmission transferred the engine power to the rear wheels, and hydraulic drum brakes allowed the Graham to bring it all back to a stop. The steel body and innovative anti-sway bars helped keep the car grounded, and the solid axle suspension system





and hydraulic shock absorbers helped provide a smooth and comfortable ride for passengers.



It all made for a car that was too many years ahead of its time, and the company struggled under the weight of public disdain for their offerings. In 1940 Graham made a last-ditch effort to save the company's fortunes by partnering with the equally struggling company, Hupp Motors, to produce a new car. Hupp had purchased the body dies for the Cord 810, and Graham provided their own engine to produce the Graham Hollywood.

This attempt to recapture the company's prior fortunes ended in failure, and Graham would suspend automobile manufacturing in September 1940.

A similar fate befell many of the American automobile manufacturers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and many of their unique and innovative designs were doomed to be forgotten or lost for many decades. Graham managed to find a different path to history after pivoting to war-time production in late 1940. Government contracts kept the company solvent enough for new company President Joseph Frazer to come on board. In the years after the war Frazer, in partnership with Henry J. Kaiser would purchase the assets of Graham-Paige for their new company Kaiser-Frazer, which would go on to leave a legacy of their own in American automobile history.

For Graham-Paige, the divestiture of automobile manufacturing assets allowed the company to go in a new direction under new ownership, and would purchase Roosevelt Raceway in New York, as well as a controlling interest in Madison Square Garden. Today's Madison Square Garden Entertainment corporation, owner of the New York Knicks of the NBA and Rangers of NHL,



has its roots in the small family truck conversion business founded by three brothers from Indiana. As an example of Graham models at the end of the company's lifespan, this Model 107 – so unpopular at the time – has since become extremely desirable with collectors. Finished in "Riviera Blue," this supercharged 1940 Graham Custom Model 107 was restored and generously donated by Carl Nordin of Wheat Ridge, Colorado, and can often be seen on display as part of the Forney Museum of Transportation Collection.



# Featured Volunteer

The Forney Museum's featured volunteer for June is Wayne Maddox! In the man's own words:

I am a true blue native starting life in Derby, Colorado (most will not even know where that is, but it is now Commerce City). In 1959 we moved to East Denver and I am a proud graduate of East High School! I have always been a car nut ever since I can remember. It started out with a pedal car when I was 3 years old then on to model cars. I was the kid that wore out the knees of his jeans pushing friction drive models all over the floor!

At 6 years old I started working, pumping gas at one of my Dad's gas stations which furthered my love of automobiles. In 1971, I had a chance to buy my first car from one of Dad's employees. It was a 1962 Buick Invicta station wagon for \$125.00. I thought the car was so neat because it had bucket seats and console and to top it off, it had power windows, power antenna, search tune radio and a motor that would really haul a\*\*!! In 1978 I had the opportunity to buy a very low mileage 1957 Dodge Royal Lancer and that started my love affair with Chrysler products.

My after school job was in the Sears Auto Center in Cherry Creek via the Distributive Education program at school. From there, I worked at several firms selling stereo gear which was my second passion. When the last company shut down and I was let go, I found a job in the jewelry business – of all things – but I discovered a hidden talent! I went on to get my degree from the Gemological Institute of America, but in 1984 my Dad said it was time for me to come back to the family business so I left the world of 3 piece suits and ties and went back to jeans and overalls.

During the time from 1984 to 1999, I developed a good number of contacts in the auto world including becoming friends with the owner of J & B Auto Crusher which was just a few blocks away. Whenever the owner would get an old car in, he would call me. I invested in a tow truck to make transport easier and Maddox Vintage Autos & Parts was born! I had always loved the big full-sized American cars and that became our mainstay. A chance meeting with a gent from Norway at a National Chrysler Club Meet in Detroit took us to the world stage. Old US cars were and still are extremely popular in Scandinavia and other parts of Europe. Soon we were filling shipping containers with old cars and parts! In 2018, the owners of J & B decided to retire and sold their property to the National Western. I lost my major source of "raw" material and decided it was time to retire. I sold the property to Jayhawk Trailers and had an auction to sell the remaining inventory.

I had known Museum Director Christof Kheim for a good number of years through the car clubs and he suggested that I volunteer at the Forney where I would also be able to show off my cars. It has been a very rewarding experience. I love to share my knowledge and passion



for the old cars with people that come to the museum and I hope to continue for a long time to come!

P.S. That Buick wagon, my first car I referred to earlier, I still have it! I still have the '57 Dodge that I bought in 1978 and...I still have the '57 Chevy Belaire that my folks bought in 1959 for our family car.

Wayne is frequently seen at the Museum assisting with exhibit changes, private events and pitching in on Free Days, as well as providing his particular expertise in classic vehicle appraisal. This year Wayne also became a member of the Forney Museum's Collections Committee. We are grateful for Wayne's selfless dedication and passion for the automobile. Thank you for everything that you do for the Museum!

## **Volunteer Birthdays**

6/1 - Isaiah Beck

6/11 - Bart Garrison

6/5 - Bruce Stover

6/23 - Wayne Maddox

6/6 - Bob Kennedy

6/26 - Duina Schloesser

6/9 - Jim Bahrenburg

6/29 - Deb Hokanson

6/11 - Sam Frisina

## **The Museum needs YOU!**

Anyone interested in volunteering or donating please reach out to us at the museum or email [volunteer@forneymuseum.org](mailto:volunteer@forneymuseum.org)

## **Memberships**

Become a Forney Museum Member TODAY! We have memberships in many different levels to fit your particular needs, with options available for as low as \$50, the right membership for you can be purchased in the museum gift shop or online at [forneymuseum.org](http://forneymuseum.org). Memberships are good for one year and make great gifts, so help support the Forney by buying a membership today!

## **General Museum Needs**

We are putting out the call for several items that are needed here at the museum. If you see anything in this section that you think you would be able to donate to the



museum to help us with our operations please reach out to our Assistant Director, Dan at [asstdirector@forneymuseum.org](mailto:asstdirector@forneymuseum.org), or call the museum at (303) 297-1113.

- 1) Diesel pickup in running, serviceable condition
- 2) Enclosed trailer (20-foot or longer) to transport Forney Museum vehicles safely & securely
- 3) Modern tire changing machine in working order
- 4) Modern wheel balancing machine in working order
- 5) Late model minivan in serviceable condition

Thank you to everyone who has already donated!

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The Forney Newsletter team is:

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Special Thanks to all of our readers!